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Online Access to Utah Hospital Charge and Quality Info Now Available

SALT LAKE CITY - Two new web sites unveiled today provide free access to an unprecedented level of detail about charges, services and quality indicators at Utah hospitals.

The first web site, known as “Utah PricePoint” (www.utpricepoint.org) allows users to easily access charge information about all common hospitalization procedures at any Utah hospital. Consumers may search for charge data using a “basic query” method or a more comprehensive “advanced query” method. Along with providing charge data, CheckPoint provides information on the average length of stay for each procedure.

The second web site, known as “Utah CheckPoint,” provides meaningful information on hospital quality and error prevention practices. Checkpoint provides reliable data on 14 preventions that medical experts agree should be taken to treat heart attacks, heart failure and pneumonia. There are six measures for heart attack, four measures for congestive heart failure and four measures for pneumonia reported in Utah CheckPoint. The web site displays the four most recently reported quarters of quality data from hospitals. The measures provide national and state comparisons on quality indicators, and more measures are anticipated to be added in the future.

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The websites are sponsored by UHA, Utah Hospitals and Health Systems Association, Utah Department of Health, and HealthInsight. Both websites may be accessed through the Utah Department of Health's "My Healthcare in Utah" website, located at <http://health.utah.gov/myhealthcare/>. The direct link to Utah PricePoint is www.utpricepoint.org; for Utah Checkpoint, go to www.utcheckpoint.org. Both sites offer reciprocal links for the convenience of consumers.

"We are pleased to be able to work in conjunction with the Utah Health Data Committee and HealthInsight to provide consumers with a significant step in improving transparency in healthcare quality and costs," commented Joseph M. Krella, President of UHA, Utah Hospitals and Health Systems Association. "We don't see the launch of these sites as the end of our efforts, but rather the beginning of a strong partnership on which to build."

"We are committed to transparency and public accountability, and we believe Utah hospitals are committed to those goals as well," noted Marc Bennett, President and CEO of *HealthInsight*. "The UHA and Utah Health Data Committee have been instrumental in providing the resources necessary to stimulate quality improvement and allow consumers to make more informed decisions about their health care."

Along with the launch of these web sites, the Utah Health Data Committee is announcing release of its second hospital comparison report on maternity and newborns. The Committee has produced topical healthcare reports comparing hospitals in Utah since December 2005.

"The more a person knows about the cost and quality of care, the more likely they are to receive the care they need and deserve," commented David Sundwall, M.D., Executive Director of the Utah Department of Health. "We call these people "informed health care consumers" and consider them an essential component of our efforts to improve health care and to develop healthy communities for our state. As healthcare costs rise, it is important that we give Utahns the tools they need to be a part of the solution—that is, to be efficient consumers of health care."

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